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JOHN COGLEY

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CATHOLICS AND BIRTH CONTROL • CHANGES IN OUR COURTS
MORRIS WEST'S VATICAN • EROTIC EPIGRAMS: JOHN UPDIKE

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INSTITUTE ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Seattle University, Seattle, Wash. June 18-August 9. An analysis by leading authorities in the Northwest. For social science teachers and others interested. No charge for attendance unless academic credit desired; apply for academic credit in advance of registration, June 17. *Inquire:* Charles J. La Cugna, Director.

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LITURGICAL CONFERENCE

Convention Hall, Philadelphia, Pa. August 19-22. *Theme:* "Renewal of Christian Education." Revs. Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., Frederick R. McManus, H. A. Reinhold, others. *Write:* John Mannion, Executive Secretary, 3428 Ninth St., N.E., Washington 17, D.C.

CHRISTIAN FAMILY CONFERENCE

Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Ind. August 23-25. *Theme:* "The Parish—Leaven of the Community." *Write:* Christian Family Movement, 1655 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago 12, Ill.

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Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit 6, Mich. August 26-29. Third Annual Midwestern Institute of Pastoral Theology, for Mich., Minn., Wis., Ill., Ind., Ohio, Ontario. *Theme:* "The Teenage Parishioner." Brother John M. Egan, F.S.C.H., Iona College; Rev. George H. Moreau, O.M.I., Bishop Fallon High School, Buffalo, N.Y.; Rev. Edward L. Scheuerman, Sacred Heart Seminary High School. Lectures, room, board and a copy of Proceedings, $30. *Inquire:* Registrar.

For further information write to the address given for the Session in which you are interested.

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THE COMMONWEAL

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Pope John

THERE ARE many explanations why John XXIII had so unparalleled a number of individuals and different religious bodies praying for him in his last illness—why peoples of various religious persuasions throughout the world manifested a deep personal concern when it became known that his death was near. Pope John had a most engaging personality. In his dealings with his fellow men of every rank and station he was genial, warm, solicitous and human, humble, simple and direct. The anecdotes about his simple friendliness are legion. He strongly impressed all, most appropriately, as wholly benign and fatherly.

Pope John's strong personal appeal had a lot to do with the wide and enthusiastic acceptance of his many statements that directly carried on and developed principles expounded by his predecessors, notably Pius XII. It was Pius who instituted, for instance, major liturgical reforms that led to the further changes recently approved by the Fathers of the Vatican Council.

Both in its direct quotations from his immediate predecessor and in its basic formulations, the impressive encyclical, *Mater et Magistra* (which so persuasively expounded one of Pope John's abiding concerns for humanity) contains many echoes of the social pronouncements of Pius XII. The basis for social justice is the sacred inviolability of every human individual, which implies his right to the means of developing and perfecting himself. Every society should have as its objective the common good. And in these days of wide disparities between national living standards, the international common good demands certain rights for poorer peoples, including aid from nations that are better off and, where necessary, the right to migrate to more fortunate lands.

Likewise, in his still more magnificent encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, which Pope John signed only on April 11, he expounded and applied to present-day conditions many of the principles enunciated by Pius XII in the latter's two decades of courageous striving for peace with justice in the world. There are points of resemblance between the two in their respective strong sentiments on the futility of modern war, the burden and danger of armaments and the basic need for the building up of mutual confidence. It was highly significant that the Holy Father addressed this comprehensive encyclical not only to Catholics throughout the world but "to all men of good will."

THERE WERE, in addition, three very telling observations about recent changes in the world that signalize the practicality of John XXIII's concern—as well as a certain tendency to range beyond the confines of a single subject in the universality of his solicitude. One is the welcome new status of the workingman in many countries and the ground he has gained in economic, cultural and political affairs. A second is the happy new prominence which a number of women have attained in the world's public life. The rise of the peoples of the colonial world, with the renewed urgency of racial justice (or the historic ending of the status of dependent peoples) comprises the third of these special observations in *Pacem in Terris.*

Many of these tradition-based views developed new force from the very fact that the beloved Pope John himself was voicing them—the sovereign pontiff whose love for all humanity could not be gainsaid. These encyclicals and other statements were widely greeted not only as compelling statements of Christian social principles but as practical expressions of Pope John's ardent love for his fellow men.

But with all its solid grounding in Christian tradition and in the attitudes of his twentieth-century predecessors, John XXIII's approach, and his aspirations for the Church, involved important elements that were both new and unique.

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No doubt his most controversial stance had to do with Communists and Communism. This stemmed from his universal respect for all men and for the sincerity of their views, however mistaken, as well as from his dedication to preserving mankind from a war with thermonuclear weapons. While consistently opposing the principles of atheistic Communism from the outset of his pontificate, he expressed the confident belief that "historical movements" based on "false philosophical teachings regarding the nature, origin and destiny of the universe and of man . . . cannot avoid being subject to changes even of a profound nature. . . ." *(Pacem in Terris)* More cordial relations with the Soviet Union and better conditions for Catholic worshippers in the Russian satellite lands were in the offing at the time of his death.

Most striking was Pope John's conviction that the Church is in need of renewal—a conviction so firm that it overcame the stubborn opposition in the Roman Curia to the convening of the Vatican Council. John's strong presence and his personal intervention on several occasions greatly contributed to the progress made toward revivifying the Church. In certain matters there can now be no return to pre-Council ways of doing things.

One object of the renewal of the Church, for which he long aspired during his pontificate, and for which Pope John repeatedly offered his intense final sufferings, was to prepare her for fruitful dialogue with other Christians and men of good will, with a view to eventual reunion. His strong ecumenical spirit was manifest from the time of his very first message as pontiff, with its special appeal for unity to the Eastern Orthodox.

It is widely recognized that the Council itself represented for Catholicism a truly new approach to other Christian bodies. They were invited to send observers to witness the proceedings, and these guests were encouraged to engage in frank discussions with various groups of the Church Fathers. His creation of Cardinal Bea's commission on church unity was an especially notable step toward carrying all this out. In a short pontificate of less than five years John XXIII did much more for the cause of Christian unity than has been achieved in many decades. He encouraged and strengthened the progressive forces in the Church and advanced the cause of world peace.

Perhaps this universally beloved spiritual leader will be most remembered for his consistently ecumenical spirit, which truly encompassed world peace and the well-being of all men. Again and again in the agony of his last illness Pope John uttered the prayer, "That they may be one." May he rest in peace.

The Fate of P.L. 78

IN REFUSING to extend Public Law 78, the House of Representatives has apparently killed the offensive *bracero* farm-labor system. The Senate is unlikely to consider extending the law (which is scheduled to expire December 31), and although there is talk of another attempt to do so in the House, the consensus is that the system is dead.

The House's decision is a victory for the social welfare groups, unions and religious agencies that have worked to arouse public indignation against P.L. 78. Under that law, passed twelve years ago when manpower needs were crucial, American growers have been allowed to import Mexicans for seasonal work in the fields. Their wages, although fixed by the government, are abysmally low by American standards. The result has been a windfall to the growers—an inexhaustible pool of low-paid workers that makes it unnecessary to offer a living wage, or even decent working conditions, to domestic farm help.

Not unexpectedly, some of the larger growers have been reluctant to give up such a profitable arrangement. Their lobbyists have kept pressure on Congress to extend the law, and until this year the law was extended repeatedly. Time, however, has caught up with P.L. 78. The efforts of welfare groups have increased. So has the reluctance of urban Congressmen to go along with their non-urban colleagues in supporting extensions of the law. The fact that four-fifths of the *braceros'* man-hours for 1962 were expended in just two states—California and Texas—meant that the number of Congressmen who might be put under direct pressure by the growers had narrowed indeed. In addition, the current high rate of unemployment and the steady decline in the number of farm jobs available helped make P.L. 78 stand out as the unfair anachronism it is.

But the end of the *bracero* system still leaves the broader problems of farm helpers untouched. A half million farm workers and their families still live in substandard housing and work for shockingly low pay under poor conditions. The protection due these workers has been fought every step of the way by the growers, so far with almost complete success. Bills now before Congress would extend to these workers the same child-labor, minimum-wage and collective-bargaining protection that other workers enjoy. But despite the public attention that has been focused on the problem in recent years, the future of this legislation does not look bright. The Administration is unwilling to move forcefully on the question, and the growers keep up pressure with high-powered lobbying. The hope is that the

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educational efforts of the social-welfare groups and the painstaking work in Congress of Senator Williams of New Jersey will tip the scales against the growers as they have in the case of P.L. 78.

Art of the Necessary

POLITICS, the saying goes, is the art of the possible. As a practical piece of worldly wisdom, there is much to commend this aphorism: interests have to be reconciled, priorities balanced and means shaped to ends. The good politician is one who knows how to get what he wants while keeping as many people happy as possible. The only trouble with "politics" as thus understood is that it often proves singularly inadequate when confronted with a situation involving moral issues—when the "interests" at stake transcend a balance of power.

Unfortunately, it is not evident that President Kennedy yet realizes this. In the face of the mushrooming Negro protest movements, the calls upon him for a straight moral statement against segregation and discrimination, and the waning patience of the Negro, he is still trying to manipulate himself and the nation out of a corner. In itself, there is certainly nothing wrong with manipulation; the only question which arises is whether it is still a wise approach. Can one meet an extraordinary situation—and surely the guarantee of Negro rights is that—with ordinary strategies?

For in the end, despite their ingenuity, even the newly proposed civil rights measures must be classified as "ordinary" strategies. The proposal, for instance, that a federal statute be enacted prohibiting discrimination in hotels, restaurants, stores—in any business enterprise handling products that cross state lines—is sweeping and clever. If enacted, it will erect one more barrier against segregationists, even an unusually high and broad one. So far, so good. But why, the Negro may well ask, can not the President support his legislative efforts with a firm public avowal of the rank injustice of racism?

No doubt there are many plausible answers which could be given to this question. One, of course, is that the President has managed of late to weaken the Southern Democrat-Republican coalition. Since there are many other important bills pending, it is necessary to keep on the good side of Southern legislators. Why risk antagonizing them on one issue at the possible expense of many others? Then, too, it might be risky to anger the segregationists any more than necessary. Thus the politician's razor at work: don't multiply opponents beyond necessity.

It is never easy to argue with a practical man; and it is not, in this case, easy to argue with the President who has shown himself adept at skillful maneuvers. Nor can it be denied that his new bill exposes him to many dangers; he is risking much. But, despite all this, does not the Negro have at least the right to a public declaration that segregation is immoral? A firm declaration to the nation would be neither a gesture nor a stunt. It would pain some people to hear it, and it would make others angry. But it would be important for the Negro and serve to remind us all that the issue is far more than political.

Next Week

ONE OF THE MOST widely discussed speeches in recent years—Father Hans Küng's "The Church and Freedom"—was delivered before capacity crowds from coast to coast earlier this year. Through the courtesy of Father Küng, the full text of that talk will appear exclusively in these pages next week. In the speech, reported only in abbreviated fashion during the tour, Father Küng analyzes the need for freedom in the Church and concludes that as the community of the faithful, the Church must not just tolerate freedom but become its insistent champion.

Test-Ban Hesitations

JUST at a time when the West appears to be taking the initiative in proposals for a test-ban agreement, prospects seem most dim for its accomplishment. Pressures within and outside the Soviet Union make it highly unlikely that the Russians will agree to take any direct steps that would lead to a test-ban in the near future. Yet the urgency of such an agreement was never more plain. If September's clear atmosphere sees the resumption of nuclear tests by either power, then indeed the "genie will be out of the bottle," as President Kennedy has warned.

Just to realize the influences that keep the Soviets from concluding a test-ban is sufficient to prevent much hope. There are, first, insistent fears within the Soviet Union that she may be dangerously far behind the United States in missiles and other nuclear weapons. These fears may have already dictated a decision to resume atmospheric tests in the fall. From another quarter, the Chinese Communists continue to put pressure on the Russians to pursue a "tougher" line toward the West, one which would equally preclude a test-ban treaty.

At least if the Soviets reject the advances made

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in the latest letter to Premier Khrushchev from President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan, they will bear the responsibility before world opinion for the failure of the negotiations. That is small comfort when peace is the issue.

Aside from Soviet intransigence, however, the United States Senate seems equally prepared to block a test-ban treaty, even if one were agreed upon. According to a survey taken by Senator Joseph S. Clark, fifty-seven Senators "at most" might support a treaty as currently proposed by the Administration. A minimum of sixty-seven would be needed to ratify one if all the Senators voted. The President is hopeful that if a treaty could be satisfactorily concluded with the Russians, then it could be pushed through the Senate. Yet the struggle that that would entail would give the Russians just the pretext they would need to accuse us of "bad faith" and to withdraw their agreement.

Unfortunately, the President seems to have promised that any test-ban agreement concluded with the Soviet Union would be in the form of a treaty, which calls for ratification by two-thirds of the Senate. Either he will have to change his tactics and push any eventual treaty through by executive order, or a concerted effort will have to be made to convince the Senators that a nuclear test-ban would indeed be a step to peaceful disarmament and would not endanger the existing "balance of terror." We would need the same assurances from the Russians, of course, but at least we should be able to decide to accept them if they should be given.

HERE AND THERE

Segregation: The Tender Trap

A NORTHERNER, I have spent most of my life in a white society that in fact, if not in theory, has been rigidly segregated. We were all white in the Catholic schools I attended, though there are some Negroes attending these same schools today. The religious orders of nuns and priests who taught me had no Negro members. (I was a grown man before I ever saw a Negro saying Mass or conversed with a Negro nun.) There were no Negroes in our neighborhood, our parish, or our public-school district. I can not recall ever seeing a Negro as a guest in our home, the homes of our relatives or friends. No one I knew was tended by a Negro physician, employed a Negro lawyer, or patronized a Negro hairdresser.

The only Negroes we saw at work were domestics, handymen, countergirls, and bus-boys. The only Negroes we knew by name were a few movie actors. A white singer who was a local radio favorite in those distant days, sang a song called "Honey, Stay Back in Your Own Backyard." It was a touching ballad about a little boy who did not understand why a "black elf" like himself should not play with white children. I thought the boy's obtuseness was not as obvious as the lyrics would have it. I recall asking one of my elders why indeed he should stay in his own backyard. The question occasioned as much embarrassment—and as vague a reply—as my hesitant enquiries about sex. I was told that if I did not know yet, I would later. It is later, much later. The reason still isn't clear.

But, when I look back over the years, I find that most of my life I have been living in an all-white society —not because of a deliberate choice but because that is the way things have been. Even in the Army during World War II, we were cut off from fellow servicemen who were Negroes. In the meantime, the military forces have been desegregated, so that can no longer happen to my sons, but it happened to me.

As it was, I was luckier than many white people of the same generation. I spent four years before the war running a Catholic Worker house of hospitality. There were always Negroes living with us there on a level of easy equality, and we got to know each other not as members of different races but as people sharing the same table. A number of Negro Catholics participated in the work of the C. W., and here again there was a chance to make friendships that cut across the color line. Over the years I have participated in certain organized efforts to achieve interracial justice, but that sort of thing is necessarily self-conscious and does not affect the conclusion that I have spent most of life in racial segregation.

For a few months, years ago, I lived on the other side of the line in the Negro ghetto of Chicago. For that short period almost all my daily associates were Negroes. With them I was at ease, but I can still recall the painful awareness of my own color as I shopped, walked up and down the streets, stopped at a restaurant or a bar, or knelt in church in that neighborhood. I was never deliberately made to feel unwelcome anywhere, but it was clear that no one with my complexion ever could really "belong." In the years since, I have worked with Negroes on various projects and, from time to time, venture far enough away from the bourgeois beaten paths to do a certain amount of interracial socializing of the Greenwich Village kind. But day-in, day-out, life on both coasts of the United States and in the Middle West as well, in big city, suburb, and small town, has been lived within the bounds of

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factual segregation. We have never lived next door to a Negro family. None of our children ever had a Negro teacher or "best friend." Normally, Negroes don't go to the churches I attend, rub elbows at the cocktail parties I am invited to, sit at the dinner tables where I am a guest. At meetings, conferences, and seminars, I meet Negroes; but when the group breaks up to go home we return to separate worlds. Such is life in the United States, North as well as South, that to return to the same world we would both have to enter the special universe of the studiously "alienated."

THERE IS nothing extraordinary about this personal history. The only break with the norm is that by moving now and then beyond the fringe I have had the chance to meet some Negroes and to count at least a few as personal friends. The same history, with slight changes, could be applied to most Negroes. They do have business and professional contacts with whites, but few have ever been guests in a white home or have gossiped over a back fence with white neighbors.

The fact is that we are strangers one to another, and none more than the "liberals" of both races. We wear masks when we meet; we play roles; in our dealings we are blacks meeting whites, or whites meeting blacks, before we are persons meeting other persons. It takes a long time before a black man and a white man can deal with each other not as racial representatives but as Republican and Democrat, Protestant and Catholic, Chicagoan and San Franciscan, carpenter and steamfitter. And usually the friendship that would make such a relationship possible is never allowed to flower. In the presence of the black man, the white man becomes suddenly aware of his color, either proudly or guiltily; the Negro, in the presence of the white man, becomes either belligerently or self-doubtingly aware of his. This is how life is in a society either formally or informally segregated, as ours is.

It is natural enough when the predominant white in such a society rationalizes his hidden fears of the unknown men around him and substitutes myth about them for fact, in order to make some kind of sense out of the absurdities of his behavior. It seems equally natural when the submerged Negro develops his own myths about The Man who stands between him and fulfillment. The inverted racism of the Black Muslim is no mystery. The only surprising thing is that the movement did not come earlier and is not having even more spectacular success than it is now enjoying. Every manner of sickness has been spawned by our patterns of segregation. Who can be surprised that Negro racism should be among the list of ills? But racism, black or white, is nonetheless a sickness, and, with all their other burdens, the responsible leaders in the Negro community realize, with anguish, that they have to fight it among their own people.

It is interesting, isn't it, that devotion to segregation has become a cause sacred to the unyielding white man and what the newspapers are now calling the "extremist" Negro? They have both carried the logic of our actual existing system to doctrinal conclusions. In the meantime, the opponents of segregation in both races are frustrated by an inability to manifest their beliefs in practice. The segregationists argue for more separation, a thicker wall between the races, more fear, or suspicion, or hate, or whatever the right word is for the present attitudes. The integrationists plead for more liberality and tolerance—but is limited largely to a following which, despite its own best judgments, is forced to choose between living in society in accordance with the existing mode of segregation or living outside it as rebels and revolutionaries.

The half-hearted compromises most of us who believe we are on the "liberal" side make in our efforts to resolve the dilemma are largely ineffective. We talk bravely of integration but our lives are lived out within the pattern of segregation. Most of us are caught up, willy nilly, in the evils of segregation. When we move in social or professional circles of compatible people, these circles usually turn out to be all-white—or all-black. When the whites among us pick out the neighborhoods where we want to bring up our children, these neighborhoods turn out to be all-white. When we set our hearts on schools of a certain excellence, the schools usually turn out to be all-white. The impact of our anti-racism, then, becomes a verbal enterprise, a matter of proclamation and declamation, not of daily life. Our way of life is such that only segregationists can really live out their creed.

This break between thought and action, between the word and the deed, can be excruciating to the "liberal" conscience. The university professor who sends his children to all-white private schools for educational, not racist, reasons is caught up more than he wants to be in segregation. He knows he is prolonging the evil, but, if you force him, he will tell you that he can not "sacrifice" the education of his children in order to make a social point. The liberal editor who moves his family away from the city streets to the pleasantness of a middle-class suburb is not deliberately abetting segregation, but that is the effect of his act. The earnest hold-out in the changing city neighborhood too often discovers after a while that his is the only white family in the neighborhood, which is not at all the kind of integration he had hoped for. Like the Negro family braving the loneliness of the white suburb, he finds that despite all the good will in the world, the system can crush those who buck it.

All of us, then, live more or less in accordance with the rigidities of segregation. It is no wonder that the words we want so often to utter stick in the throat, bones of guilt and self-accusation. JOHN COGLEY

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Catholics and Birth Control

I DON'T KNOW if the birth control issue is quite the hot potato it once was, but it is still one of the most divisive issues in American life, constantly exacerbating the relations between Catholics and most other Americans. The dispute that has taken place in Chicago in recent months over providing birth control devices for public welfare recipients is typical; if my guess is good, we can expect many more of these in the years ahead.

The difference of opinion over artificial birth control is a real one. Yet over the years the disputes which have arisen around this question have been sharper and more divisive than they really needed to be, and on this score I would hesitate to give either group a completely clean bill of health. Bad arguments have been made on both sides of the dispute, and charges have been hurled that would better have been left unsaid.

On their side, Protestants and Jews often seem singularly obtuse on this question. To the Catholic conscience, birth control by chemical or mechanical means has traditionally been repugnant. Indeed, as Catholics love to point out, this is a position Protestants shared until comparatively recent times. Why then should Protestants and Jews be surprised when Catholics show their reluctance to support a public program based on policies they consider immoral?

To the believer, whether Protestant, Catholic or Jew, questions of public policy must be measured against a moral yardstick. This is as true in the case of birth control as on anything else. In a nation that enshrines respect for conscience into law, it is surely odd to encounter the suggestion that Catholics should be silent about their conscientious convictions in these matters. Yet that is very often what people seem to expect, and they react in hurt surprise when Catholics make their views known.

That is one side of the coin. There is, of course, another. Catholics, I think, have often taken their position in these disputes more on the basis of pique then anything else. Because proponents of artificial birth control have been articulate and often aggressive, Catholics have tended to react too strongly in the opposite direction. This has done as much damage to Catholic thinking in this area as it has to community relations and national unity.

Thus, confronted with alarmists and scare-mongers, very many Catholics have tended to take a real head-in-the-sand position on population problems. Because we oppose artificial birth control, we have frequently tended to deny that any problem exists. Cultivate the riches of the sea, we are told, or invent a better plow; if worst comes to worst, one eminent authority assured us, we can always plan on sending our surplus population to colonize the remote planets of our universe. In all these points, undoubtedly, there is some truth, but we must admit that they provide rather cold comfort to a man like India's Nehru, who must face the problem of an exploding population right now.

More than that, Catholic reaction to birth control propaganda has had a decided influence on our own internal affairs. Catholics see the primary end of marriage as the procreation and education of children. Education here is used to include the whole range of what is needed for the health and welfare of a child in our complex society. Thus the Catholic ideal, it seems to me, is responsible parenthood. Yet too often articles in the Catholic press and sermons from our pulpits have made it sound as if the Catholic ideal were to have just as many children as was physically possible, as fast as possible. Even the custom of always picking as "Catholic Family of the Year" one with an unusually large number of children strengthened this popular view.

All of this is changing, I think. Catholics are now less inclined to brush off the population problem in the underdeveloped countries, and there is less tendency in Catholic circles to imagine that Catholic devotion can be measured in direct proportion to family size. But the problem of public policy remains, and it is a tough one.

To me, the most sensible government posture has long appeared to be one of strict neutrality. Public policy requires some measure of consensus, a consensus which clearly does not exist on this question, in either direction. This fact alone seemed to suggest strongly that governmental bodies should follow a hands-off policy on this matter, endorsing neither of two contradictory moral views. In short, I have always favored strict separation of state and family planning.

Even on narrowly political grounds I would still hold the same position as far as birth control and foreign aid is concerned. Foreign aid is in trouble enough, without weighing it down even further by adding the burden of the birth control debate. But on domestic welfare programs I must admit I am less sure than I once was.

I am convinced that we must support the equality of all consciences before the law, just as we must support the civic equality of all religions. But what this should mean in practice when it comes to birth control is hard to work out. The trouble here is that one man's neutrality is another man's partisanship. For Catholics, governmental neutrality is satisfactory; for others it is a cowardly evasion of a growing problem. I do not see how the dilemma can easily be resolved, and my own suspicion is that we all need to do a lot of homework on this issue.

JAMES O'GARA

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Ronald Steel & William Lineberry

Race for the Moon

Is it worth twenty billion dollars to the American people to put a man on the moon?

IN SPRING, when the halls of Congress echo with the screams of butchered appropriation bills, the nation's lawmakers are busily engaged in their favorite pastime of hacking away at the Administration's budget. Some requests—foreign aid is the classic example—are usually drawn and quartered before they emerge in bloody condition from committee hearing rooms. But a few others are spared this annual agony. They are praised and patted like the sacred cows they have become, and endowed with virtually all the funds they desire. The Defense Department is one of these sacred cows, the National Institute of Health is another, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is perhaps the most sacred of all.

Despite its humble beginnings in the post-Sputnik year of 1959 with a $339 million budget, NASA has managed the remarkable feat of getting Congress to double its budget nearly every year until it is now asking $5.7 billion for fiscal 1964. While this would be an enviable record for an electronics growth company, such expansion is usually frowned upon by the purse-wielding Congress. But in NASA's case, to indulge in a bad pun, the sky has always been the limit. This spring, however, for the first time, Congress is beginning to consider the vague possibility that perhaps the space budget should not necessarily be doubled every year, or even—heresy of heresies—that the Kennedy Administration's project to send an American to the moon by the end of the decade may not be worth the $20 billion that a publicity-conscious Administration wants. Belatedly, and even with some reluctance, Congress is beginning to take a less starry-eyed look at the $5.7 billion space bill that NASA has dumped in its lap for the usual automatic approval.

Congressional scrutiny has been focusing largely on Project Apollo—NASA's fancy name for the project to put a man on the moon. While no one in Congress would dare to question the necessity of a crash space program—space, like motherhood and patriotism, is beyond criticism—there is some discussion of priorities. And in NASA's space budget the priorities are easy enough to sort out: three-quarters of the $5.7 billion requested for this year is earmarked for the man-on-the-moon project. "The question," as James Reston pointed out in the New York *Times*, "is not whether the exploration of space is important, but whether it is more important to put a man on the moon than to get several million men off the dole."

While nobody is eager to come out for keeping men on the dole, neither the Administration nor Congress has been particularly interested in reversing the priorities—that is, channeling the billions that go into the space program into projects that will make life a little more tolerable on earth. President Kennedy has made it clear that he is not willing to buy an either-or argument: that if he cuts the man-on-the-moon budget, Congress will vote money to take men off the dole. Since money for space is considerably easier to get than money for schools and hospitals, the Administration has chosen not to waste its energies.

THE ADMINISTRATION has defended the man-on-the-moon program on both scientific and political grounds—but there are skeptics around Washington who sense that the stress is on the latter. In order to win the support of the scientific community, NASA has tried to emphasize the scientific rewards to be gained from Project Apollo. Advocates claim that it would stimulate scientific research, unlock the secrets of the universe, and satisfy man's endless desire to explore the unknown. While it may do all of this, other aspects of the space program lurk behind the scientific décor. In a recent speech NASA director James Webb defended the Administration's crash space program by saying: "It is not a matter for doubt that any President carrying, as all Presidents do, the greatest measure of responsibility for the future of the nation, could have failed to act after the August, 1961, clear demonstration of Soviet capability and its world-wide exploitation." Which is to say that nobody in Washington wants to be second to the Russians in space.

This is the political argument which is being sold to Congress by Administration spokesmen who warn that unless we get a man on the moon before the Russians do, our prestige will suffer intolerably and we will find

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ourselves "second-best." And in the cold war, as Congress has been told often enough, the U. S. can take no chances on coming in second.

Waving the flag always tends to have a certain appeal on Capitol Hill, but there are a number of weak spots in the Administration's argument that a few Congressmen have begun to poke into. In the first place, as Webb himself admitted in testimony before the House space committee, there is no evidence that the Russians are trying to put a man on the moon. Should this indeed be the case, it opens up the interesting possibility that perhaps they may wait until 1966, by which time we will be spending $10 or $15 billion a year in beating them to the moon, and then announce that the Soviet Union hasn't the slightest idea of attempting such a shallow propaganda gimmick. Instead, it will devote the $3 billion it might have spent on moon exploration into building dams for Africans. In this case there might be some question as to how much prestige the U. S. would get out of its moon shot—especially since the desire to impress the people of the underdeveloped nations seems to be the motivating force behind the Administration's point about prestige.

On the other hand, perhaps the Russians are feverishly working away in secret to beat the wily capitalists to the moon. If this is the case, they will probably manage to do it since they have a lead in rocket boosters that may give them the power to put a man on the moon within three or four years if they are willing to sacrifice everything else to it. For the U. S. to spend some $30 billion in order to be *second* on the moon would be a very curious use of our resources indeed.

"Even if we do accelerate this program on a crash basis," says Rep. Perkins Bass (R., N. H.), one of the 59 in the House to vote against Kennedy's crash moon budget in 1961, "there is no guarantee that we can beat the Russians to the moon. In fact, in my best judgment we cannot, because we are so far behind in the big booster field. . . . One sure way to lose out to the Russians in this space race is to try to outmatch them on their own grounds in this area of spectaculars of little benefit to man."

Finally, supposing that we actually do manage to get there first, none of the astronauts get sacrificed in the process, and that the Russians are chewing their fingernails in despair, how long will this space prestige last? Answer: Until the Russians get there themselves, which they will do a few months or years later when the world will be as bored with moon landings as it already is with Sputniks. At that point we can expect the President, whoever he is, to be asking Congress for $100 or $200 billion to beat the Russians (or the Chinese, or a united Europe) to Mars in order to keep up our national morale.

The Kennedy Administration has been issuing reams of publicity handouts to justify the scientific importance of the Apollo project. The nation's scientists have been supporting the basic goals of the space program—although not necessarily the priorities of the moon landing project—largely because of its scientific importance. They continually stress that *science* should be the primary consideration in the program. As Lee DuBridge, president of the California Institute of Technology, told the House space committee: "The popular conception is that the one and only important objective is to get a couple of guys on the moon and bring them back. If these fellows just get to the moon and look around and say, 'It is kind of pretty up here,' and come back with no further information, I think it would not be worth one percent or even a tenth of a percent of our national budget just to make that joy ride. . . . I think this committee and the Congress can have a broader and deeper view toward the space program than only to beat the Russians, or beat them to the moon. Think of it as one of the great scientific achievements or enterprises of all time."

WHILE SCIENTISTS are in agreement on emphasizing the scientific rather than the propaganda aspects of space exploration, they are divided on the utility of putting a man on the moon as the be-all and end-all of our space program. "I'd rather see us explore space in a more temperate and well-thought-out way," Nobel Prize winner Polycarp Kusch said recently. "Instrument exploration is almost certainly more effective and cheaper (than manned flights) and in the face of pressing national needs, I take a dim view of spending $20 billion in a relatively short time on exploring the moon."

A number of scientists, including such Nobel Prize winners as Dr. Peter Debye and Dr. James Franck, maintain that instruments could serve scientific needs better than a manned moon flight. And Dr. Vannevar Bush stated recently: "There is nothing a man can do in space that cannot be done better and more cheaply by instruments. . . . There is very little scientific knowledge to be gained by rushing to hurtle men into space. To me such exploits are little more than stunts that appeal to the gladiator instincts."

British physicist R. L. F. Boyd maintains that for scientific purposes "man is a nuisance in space. . . . The plain fact of the matter is that for one-tenth of the cost one could get ninety percent of the valuable information" without facing the technological difficulties of putting a man on the moon and getting him back to earth alive.

If Dr. Boyd's estimate is correct, and if the Apollo project can be kept within its $20-billion budget (which virtually no one any longer believes possible), that would make our man on the moon effort add up to $2 billion for science and $18 billion for a try at prestige. Some people are beginning to ask whether there might not be a cheaper way of getting the Africans, Asians and Latin Americans to admire our prowess.

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It is the scientific aspect of the Administration's space drive that is nettlesome to many scientists. Warren Weaver of the National Academy of Sciences wrote recently, ". . . I do not think that scientific considerations justify the proposed magnitude of the program, and even more emphatically I do not believe that scientific considerations justify its frantic, costly, and disastrous pace."

ANOTHER problem disturbing to scientists is the effect of the lunar landing program on other scientific needs. By raiding the scientific community for the crash space program, the government has created a shortage of scientists in certain other fields. Space agency officials claim that only seven percent of our scientific and engineering manpower will be used up by the space program. But the Department of Commerce has been alarmed that almost all of the 30,000 engineers and scientists entering research this year will be absorbed by space programs. A warning has also been issued by the President's Science Advisory Council that the nation faces a severe shortage of scientists and engineers unless it is able to produce far more of them to meet the seemingly endless needs of space activities.

In a larger sense the debate over Project Apollo can be said to revolve around the question of priorities. Dr. Weaver has drawn up an impressive list of what the nation could do with the $20-to-$30 billion we will spend to put a man on the moon: Grant a ten percent raise over a ten-year period to every teacher in the U.S., give $10 million each to 200 small colleges; finance seven-year fellowships at $4,000 each for 50,000 new scientists; create three new Rockefeller Foundations; build complete universities for every new nation added to the U.N. since its founding.

This argument—that there are better ways to spend our money than going to the moon—has received unexpected support in Congress from the Senate Republican Policy Committee, of all places. In a recent seventeen-page statement it suggested that perhaps our own terrestrial needs could be met before we worried about going to the moon. It posed such questions as: "Is it more important to have a man on the moon than to conquer cancer which will take the lives of 40 million Americans now living? Is being there first more important than insuring an adequate water resource for our great metropolitan centers? Is a fistful of lunar dust meaningful to the seventeen million Americans who, we are told, go to bed hungry each night?" While the Republican policy committee hastened to add that "no advocacy of large government spending is intended," it did venture to suggest that "within the framework of fiscal responsibility, these problems should, perhaps, be examined side by side with the moon-shot program."

The ambivalent attitude expressed by the committee report—we could do a lot of good things on earth if we are willing to spend the money, but we dare not be "fiscally irresponsible"—was, of course, grist for the Administration. All along it has been arguing that if the space budget were cut, Congress would never appropriate the same funds for earthly needs. At a recent press conference President Kennedy said: "My judgment is that what would happen would be that they would cut the space program and you would not get additional funds for education. We have enough resources, in my opinion, to do what needs to be done in the field, for example, of education, and to do what needs to be done in space."

While the President's response may be partially true, it only confirms James Reston's mournful comment that the Administration's battle cry seems to be: "Ask not what is best for the country, but what is easiest to get through Congress." It fails to explain whether the crash space program is an intelligent use of the taxpayer's money, or what disasters would befall the nation if the lunar landing were postponed—perish the thought—until the mid-1970's.

THE fact that Congress itself is beginning to ask some of these questions was evidenced by the remarks recently made by Senator J. W. Fulbright in delivering the annual Clayton lectures at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy: "I find the negative argument that we would not in any case use funds that now go into space for other constructive purposes a singularly unconvincing reason for the expenditure of vast sums of public money. This argument itself, in my opinion, strengthens the case for greater efforts in education."

Senator Fulbright's comments are a sign that Congress is at last reviving from its long slumber of acquiescence before the hitherto sacrosanct space budget. For the first time the Administration is being asked not only to present a space budget, but to present some reasonable justification for it. The recent festivities surrounding Major Cooper's flight have tended to obscure, but not necessarily diminish, the desire of a number of influential Congressmen to cast the same cold eye on the space budget that the lawmakers habitually turn toward most other demands on the taxpayer's money.

It would be gratifying if the Administration, instead of trying to bludgeon Congress with the prospect of a Soviet "victory" in the "race" to the moon, would occasionally remind the nation that the moon represents only a part of the continuing challenge of space exploration.

Perhaps the moon has always symbolized the romantic for man. Lovers make wishes on it. Cows jump over it. Dogs bay at it. And Tin Pan Alley writes songs about it. But one wonders whether this $20-billion project is simply the Administration's idea of how to romanticize an increasingly boring cold-war competition—another addition to the national herd of sacred cows.

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MICHAEL D. ZEIK

Zen Catholicism

There are more bridges than walls between Buddhism and Christianity

FOR MANY Americans, the first contact with Zen Buddhism came by way of the exotic antics of California beatniks. Let us admit with Nietzsche, however, that "the first adherents of a movement are no argument against it." Now that the fringe has had its fling, more serious students are taking over this body of Eastern sapiential literature for analysis in depth.

"Can a philosophy of life which originated in India centuries before Christ—still accepted as valid, in one or another of its many variants, by several hundred millions of our contemporaries—be of service to Catholics . . . in elucidating certain aspects of the Church's own message?" This is the question with which Dom Aelred Graham, Benedictine abbot and scholar, begins his gem of a book, *Zen Catholicism* (Harcourt Brace, $4.95). The answer, which the author makes his own, is that of Aquinas: "All that is true, by whomever it has been said, is from the Holy Ghost."

It appears that there are more bridges than walls between Buddhism and Christianity. This is, in part, because Buddha, the great spiritual leader who rose in the northeast of India 1500 years ago, never proposed a theology to rival other theologies. In fact, he broke with his native Hinduism by refusing to involve himself in metaphysical speculation. Abstracting from such questions as life after death, he sought only to make *this* life bearable. His life's mission was not theology, but therapy. And except that his "patients" suffered only the "normal" psychoses of egotism, lust and selfishness, there is, perhaps, more point in comparing him to Freud than to Christ.

Zen itself is an oriental form of Buddhism which evolved around the ninth Century, after Buddhism penetrated into China and was to some degree fused with Taoism. The Chinese word *ch'an*, from which the Japanese word *Zen* derives, is itself a rendering of the Indian *dhyana*—meditation. But Zen is more a matter of experience than definition; and as to what that experience is, Zen masters are fond of quoting: "Those who say do not know; those who know do not say." Nevertheless, man is a communicating animal; and Eastern teachers have no more been able to refrain from elaborating on the ineffable than Western mystics. It is very useful in such instances to have a hardheaded, no-nonsense Englishman, after the manner of a Berkeley or a Hume, such as I take Dom Aelred to be, go to work on the subject.

DOM AELRED deduces that Zen is essentially an attitude, an attitude of directness and simplicity, uncomplicated by self-consciousness. "When I raise my hand, there is Zen," said one of the masters, "but when I *assert* that I have raised the hand, Zen is no more there." The insertion of "I" into every action, thought, or opinion constitutes what might be called Original Sin for the Zen Buddhist. In proposing a direct, childlike, "phenomenological" relation to reality, Zen is not directly religious. But inasmuch as grace builds on nature, to eliminate preoccupation with self, to become as little children, to "consider the lilies of the field"—this kind of *reductio ad obiectum* serves as an invaluable prelude to religious experience. It is just this simplicity and serenity, prerequisite for hearing God's word, that Zen attempts to develop. It should not (and except in the case of a few teachers does not) claim to *be* God's word.

"Few people live on the spot where they are," wrote D. H. Lawrence. To live "on the spot" is Zen. "The Way is near, but men seek it afar," wrote the masters. "It is in easy things, but men seek for it in difficult things. . . . Everyday is a good day; your *everyday mind* (as opposed to grandiose, exalted dreams)—that is the Way!" Comparisons with the teachings of St. Francis de Sales and Père de Caussade (the present moment pregnant with God) come readily to mind, and the author skilfully relates the two traditions. He might well have added, I think, the insight of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. "The little way" seems spiritually akin to "the everyday mind," although in the case of the Christian saints we are on the other side of serenity, caught up in the love of Love.

Concerning the one phenomenon in Zen which appears to be outside the little way of objective serenity, namely, *sartori*, the blissful moment or exalted state of enlightenment, Dom Aelred offers what seems to me a superb analysis. If you have ever wondered to what extent the prayerful experiences of a Buddhist monk and a St. John of the Cross might be alike, Dom Aelred's explanation of *sartori* will be useful. He believes it to

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be the full *realization* of the unselfconscious I, including the "is-ness," the *esse,* which permeates one's identity. Aware of this undifferentiated is-ness, one loses one's sense of separateness from all other beings and from God: "one identifies totally in the basic element in all that one knows—being, existence, reality. Now as direct knowledge of reality is pleasurable, and the more abiding the reality the greater the pleasure, it follows that the immediate awareness of apparently unlimited *existence*—which results in what has been called 'cosmic consciousness'—has a deeply beatifying effect."

In this way, Dom Aelred explains, some of the eastern mystics have gone on to assert that the inner self (Atman) is actually God (Brahman), the Absolute Principle of all existence. This is, of course, inadmissible to the Christian, and, what is more to the point, indemonstrable by the mystic. I take it, then, that *sartori* is really only a natural threshold to any genuine mystical experience (i.e. God-experience); but again, a valuable contemplative prelude, if it be not misinterpreted. It appears also that at least excerpts from the great Eastern classic of spirituality, the *Bhagavad-Gita,* were known to St. Teresa of Avila. Upon reading certain passages relating to meditation and to the state of purity and detachment of soul requisite, she exclaimed in her characteristically terse manner, "Whoever said this no doubt understood what he was talking about."

YET Dom Aelred is not exactly in the position of advising westerners to become disciples of Zen. He is in perfect accord here with another admirer of Zen, one of the most creative contemporary psychologists, Rollo May. Dr. May respects the Zen tradition highly as a corrective for Western psychological attitudes, inasmuch as all cultural developments tend to be one-sided. But as for the Westerner's becoming an adept of Zen, he warns that whenever an attitude toward life, be it psychological, aesthetic or religious, is assumed from a foreign culture, "its adherents are invited to jump out of their own cultural skins; problems are oversimplified and by-passed because they are not present in the new attitude one takes over." Dom Aelred goes one step further. There is almost no viable Zen culture left in the orient to which the Westerner can adhere. Technology and materialism are taking their toll in Japan as well as in the West. The West therefore should study Zen not only to enrich and confirm its own spiritual traditions, but also to save Zen!

About ten years ago, Dom Aelred aired certain reservations he had in connection with Thomas Merton's call to Americans to put down their newspapers in favor of more contemplative pursuits. In the course of the years and the spiritual development of both men, we appear to have come full circle: for it is clear that Thomas Merton is *himself* reading the newspapers (or is at least much concerned with the nuclear tests reported therein), while Dom Aelred is here concerned with the drying up of the spirit in Western man. What I think we may conclude is, not so much that Martha and Mary have exchanged their traditional roles, as that both men are now giving us the *fruit* of their contemplation—an act of transmission which, according to Aquinas, unites both the excellence of action *and* contemplation. "What interested Catholics should explore," writes Dom Aelred, "is whether contemplation has not a much more generalized and non-professional character than is often supposed. The notion that the contemplative state is an exclusive preoccupation with God is misleading, since God excludes nothing." "Amen," I am sure, from Gethsemani.

As I see it, the increased concern of the West for Eastern thought can be attributed to two reasons: one immediate and practical; the other more vague but also more ultimate. In the first place Westerners are frazzled almost beyond endurance, and want breath and serenity. Not aware of the long tradition of "the cloud of unknowing" in the Church—the cloud that sheathes the bright juridical blade of moral theology—they turn to the mystical East. The second reason has something to do, I think, with what Teilhard de Chardin was talking about when he described the "evolution of the noosphere." This earth once covered by red rock, the lithosphere; then by the fluid green and blue of the hydrosphere and atmosphere; is now covered with a phosphorescent layer of thought—the noosphere. And we are in the midst of a great synthesis, a mega-synthesis of thought: "ever more complexity, and thus ever more consciousness."

"The outcome of the world, the gates of the future," de Chardin wrote, "are not thrown open to a few of the privileged nor to one chosen people to the exclusion of all others. They will open to an advance of all together, in a direction in which all together can join and find completion in a spiritual renovation of the earth. . . ." When Pope John received an almost unprecedented delegation of twenty-eight Japanese Buddhist monks in special audience last November, he told them that both Catholicism and Buddhism "work for peace, seek the betterment of man, and honor God."

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An Exchange of Views

Catholicism on the Campus

West Baden, Ind.

TO THE EDITORS: Mr. John Cogley's article ["Catholicism on the Campus," April 19] has no doubt produced a flood of replies. The objections he raises, if valid, constitute a dramatic incursion on the status quo. So dramatic in fact that I must ask, would he grant my basic assumption—that there should be Catholic education, the crown of which would be the progressive development of the Catholic culture? If not, the following are but interesting archaisms.

A recent statement made by the General of the Society of Jesus, Very Reverend John B. Janssens, S. J., indicates his awareness of the problem Mr. Cogley poses, as well as his policy. "We are dealing here," he says, speaking of the Society's educational labors, "with a work of primordial importance in the Church of God. If we forsake it, in order to free all our men for baptizing, preaching and hearing confessions, within thirty or forty years we will be faced with a society that is completely secular."

I think an explanation for his emphasis can be found in a recent theory of Father Karl Rahner. Rahner maintains that the chief purpose of the lay and religious states is to represent the Church's life. The purpose of the lay state is to represent the cosmic and this-world characteristic, that of the religious state to represent her eschatological and transcendental characteristic. Were she to lack either, the Church's life is not adequately lived or represented in the world. To the extent that she lacks either one in any area of human activity she is not fully lived or represented.

Now one of the most important of human activities is the search for and communication of truth. Here the priest-scholar stands as witness to the truth, together with the lay intellectual. Both are needed for the complete representation of the Church's life in this key area.

I fear that, if the priest were found only in the religion classroom or in sacerdotal administration, his students—and the world—might well consider him—and therefore his part of the Church's life—as closed to the world of science, math, English, etc. It would perpetuate the unhappy impression that the priest has office hours only in the fastnesses of his church or rectory where he is carefully sealed off from the contamination of the world.

Rahner makes another point applicable here. Each individual is obliged to either the lay or religious state and must choose it in mature freedom. But *within* each of the two states there is a whole spectrum of possibilities. Here again, Rahner insists, the individual must choose what he is best equipped to do and what most seems the will of God for him.

Now what about the young man who knows that he is called to be a priest, yet realizes that all his inclinations and talents within the priesthood are to work as a priest-scientist? Or what about the man who knows that he is to enter the lay state, yet realizes that his work within that state should be to teach theology? Must these men abandon their talents to follow their state? The answer seems patent: if a man has a genuine call to the priesthood or lay state, and has genuine talents too, he is to use them in that state, not jettison them.

Much is made, finally, of the "Catholic atmosphere" of our schools. If this phrase means anything, it is this: the impact upon the students of the Church's life fully and vibrantly lived. Yet how can this atmosphere be created and communicated in its totality if one of its two basic constituents is lacking? If the priest is restricted to religion class, confessional or counseling, it cannot be done. Together with the layman, he must take his place in the classroom. Together priest and laymen will then adequately represent the Church's eschatological and cosmic characteristics. Anything less than this will fail to achieve that *formation* which we rightly value as highly as information.

This theoretical discussion does not suddenly populate secular campuses with a sufficient number of chaplains. Nor does it administer to the needs of the many Catholics on Catholic campuses not reached by priests in either sacerdotal or professorial capacity. Perhaps it is enough to have tried to push the problem one halting step toward a solution. JOHN R. CROWLEY, S.J.

Reply

Santa Barbara, Calif.

TO THE EDITORS: I feel sure that Father Janssen's statement in its proper context must be less paradoxical and sweeping than it sounds in isolated quotation. It is hard to imagine even the Father-General of the Jesuits claiming that the whole tone of society is utterly dependent on one order's work. In any case, it would be neither prudent nor proper for a layman to

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comment on matters concerning the internal affairs of the Society of Jesus.

I would hope, though, that however the Jesuits expend their energy, religious communities of equal zeal and competence will be found to take up the challenge found on the non-Catholic campuses of America.

Meeting that challenge is not of course just a matter of releasing priests from intellectual work for "baptizing, preaching, hearing confession"—though the pastoral needs are great enough; nor can priests who take up such work be reasonably accused of sealing themselves off from the "contamination of the world." What I have in mind, rather, is the establishing of a genuine Catholic witness in places where there are thousands upon thousands of young Catholics in a formative period in their lives who are frequently treated like step-children of the Church.

On the same campuses, the actual culture not only of the United States but of the Catholic community in the United States is being shaped. For doesn't it stand to reason that if most Catholics are now being educated on non-Catholic campuses, what happens to them there —or what does *not* happen, like their theological education's keeping pace with their secular training—is very significant for the future of the Church? Undoubtedly, a priest teaching mathematics in a Catholic college or high school is "witnessing to the truth," as Father Crowley suggests—but no more effectively than one explicating the Natural Law or conducting a course in Scripture at a student center at the State University. My point in the original column was that too many are doing the former and not enough are engaged in the latter.

Father Crowley emphasizes the need for the development of *the* Catholic culture. If there is a significant difference between us, and I am not sure there is, perhaps here is where it lies. I have no faith in *the* Catholic culture (whatever that is) which would exist in isolation from our (pluralistic) American culture. I believe, rather, that Catholicism is catholic enough to relate itself to various cultures, not only in the pre-Christian East but in the post-Christian West.

Establishing such a relevance strikes me as the primary task of the Catholic educational effort in the years ahead. And isn't it obvious that it must be accomplished primarily on the "secular" frontiers of society, beginning with the secular university?

I hope no one interprets this concern as a campaign to abandon existing Catholic institutions of higher learning. Whatever the future, the Catholic University, Notre Dame, and the Jesuit schools will continue to play a significant formative role in the educational effort of the Church. But circumstances are such that their original preemptive role is being diminished. For even the best Catholic universities can not count on single-handedly shaping the Catholic response to the cultural challenges facing the Church, and certain of our less distinguished institutions may be more of a handicap than a help.

The major cultural battles of our times are being fought on the secular campus. That is where the embattled troops are found, including the Catholic troops. That is where the victory will be won, if there is to be a victory. Yet, that is not where we are concentrating our elite officers. This, in what I hope is an inappropriate military metaphor, is how I see the problem.

In more literal terms, let me state it this way: The American Catholic community spends a phenomenal amount of money and human effort on higher education. At a time when few Catholics attended college, it made good sense to pour almost all of this into our sectarian effort. But now that the number of Catholic collegians has multiplied and most are to be found on secular campuses, hasn't the time come to ask whether the balance should be tipped, by the sheer factual situation, to favor Catholic work in the general university, as against expanding a system that is doomed to be inadequate, unpromising, and incapable of fulfilling the needs of the overwhelming majority?

Pioneer educators like the Jesuits and the Congregation of Holy Cross a century ago did what had to be done to supply leaders for an emergent Catholic community. They added glorious pages to the history of the American Church in so doing.

But the Catholic group is no longer emerging; it has emerged. Other religious communities, including sisterhoods, who are now thinking of entering higher educational work should—it seems to me—attempt to meet the present needs of the Church, which are dramatically evident on almost every secular campus in the United States. They will find challenges there great enough and varied enough to meet any stipulations, whatever the particular talents of their members. JOHN COGLEY

Erotic Epigrams

I

The landscape of love
can only be seen
through a slim windowpane
the viewer's breath fogs.

II

Iseult, to Tristan
(condemned to die),
is like a letter of reprieve
which is never delivered
but he knows has been dispatched.

III

Hoping to make a mirror, the lover
polishes the face of his beloved
until it becomes a skull.

JOHN UPDIKE

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THE SCREEN

Siblings Hissing

ALL THEMES considered, there seems to be no subject of greater interest to film makers than family life. Although American examples get more elaborate and more smothered in psychology, adventure, or just plain folksiness, they continue to pour onto our screens. Best of the recent family-life movies is "Hud"—even though Paul Newman's performance in the title role is so impressive and his portrait of a mean, nasty, self-centered rancher so dominates the picture that Hud seems to be the whole show. But no matter how you slice it, the movie is about the whole Bannon family, or at least the three males left in it. Seeing the film as a whole, and a very good film too, is the only way to make some sense out of its strange story.

Paul Newman, who has had plenty of practice playing the tough, handsome no-good in films like "Sweet Bird of Youth" and "The Hustler," is compelling as Hud, the unprincipled, dame-chasing, wild buck. But Melvyn Douglas is also effective as Hud's father, Homer Bannon, the proud old man who built up an enormous cattle ranch in northwest Texas. He hopes to retain his holdings, although he takes a dim view of the methods of his selfish son, and he has cause to be worried about his orphaned grandson who adores the dashing Uncle Hud. Brandon de Wilde, repeating his hero-worshiping role of "All Fall Down," is a likable puppy who enjoys tagging along with his uncle. The big question is, will grandpa be able to teach the boy the difference between right and wrong and wean him away from restless, pleasure-seeking Hud?

What story there is, is mainly concerned with this problem, although writers Irving Ravetch and Harriet Frank, Jr., who based their script on Larry McMurty's novel *Horseman, Pass By* and came up with some brilliant dialogue, attach much mystery to the central problem and put the emphasis on Hud—without ever really explaining how he got the way he is. In fact, neither the story nor the characters show much development.

The action, however, and the character expositions are fascinating, thanks mainly to the direction of Martin Ritt, who along with Irving Ravetch gave the film its good production. The views of Texas, the Bannon ranch, and the near-by town, all handsomely photographed in black and white, have a genuine feeling of place. And the people portrayed by this good cast under Ritt's thoughtful direction behave like real people in a real place. Outstanding in the cast is Patricia Neal as the Bannon housekeeper, the one person who, perhaps along with the adoring nephew, might have saved Hud if he could have conquered his violent, cynical self long enough to want to be helped.

Scene after scene in "Hud" quivers with emotion, but most moving are the departure of the housekeeper after Hud's assault, and the tremendously stirring episode in which the Bannons' diseased cattle are shot. No doubt the film's parts are better than its whole. And perhaps the moral to the picture, if any, comes at the sad finale after grandpa's funeral: the nephew says goodbye, and Hud is left alone in his bitterness. It is like the sardonic finale of "Craig's Wife"—those who live only for themselves are left by themselves.

THE UNCLE in "Savage Sam," I'm glad to report, is a much nicer guy. Well played by Brian Keith, he really cares for his two nephews and on several occasions succeeds in giving sound and helpful advice to the older of the boys (Tommy Kirk), a sensitive teenager beset by problems not only with vicious Indians and his own girl, who is intent on marriage, but also with his young brother (Kevin Corcoran) who is a hellion. Walt Disney's new film, like "Hud," is set in Texas, not the Texas of today, but the wild country of some ninety years ago. It is beautiful, hilly country and the fine Technicolor photography shows it off to advantage.

"Savage Sam," stemming from Fred Gipson's sequel to his "Old Yeller" (in fact this dog is the son of Old Yeller) is mainly concerned with a long chase. Apaches kidnap Tommy and his visiting girl and his young brother; and a group of Texas neighbors, led by the uncle, pursue the wild Indians and their victims. These Indians really are wild, and treat their prisoners badly. The chase, complete with some good nature scenes along the way, is exciting. I'm sure kids will get quite a thrill out of its tense action scenes, especially those involving faithful Savage Sam who, though wounded, follows the trail and aids the rescue. The trouble with the picture, however, especially for adults, is in its opening reels, during which the brothers bicker and fight so much that the movie is in danger of becoming a diatribe on the worst kind of sibling behavior. Perhaps this almost vicious brother-fighting is meant to be humorous, or meant to set a background for the later displays of brotherly devotion; but it gets the otherwise interesting movie off on a wrong foot.

NOT ONLY off on a wrong foot, but wrong all the way through is "Spencer's Mountain," based on Earl Hamner, Jr.'s novel about a struggling hillbilly family in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The setting has been moved to the gorgeous Grand Teton country of Wyoming—and never did a Technicolor movie look more like a postcard. Its people are strictly Hollywood too, talking back-country talk and mixing humor and pathos that even Gene Stratton Porter would have shied away from. Henry Fonda plays the rough-and-ready, hard-working father well enough, and lovely Maureen O'Hara is more beautiful than ever in her chic dresses

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—but they are nobody's parents and nobody's hillbillies, although their nine kids are crawling all over the place.

The eldest (James MacArthur) wants to go to college; and that's what the story is mainly about: how will this poor family send this ambitious boy off for "book larnin'"? Interspersed between the humor and pathos are a lot of sexy touches, animal and human, but mostly human, especially when the daughter of the quarry manager is determined to get James alone into the fields of clover. It's hard to figure out just what "Spencer's Mountain" has in mind except to attract people to the box office. Wise customers won't be taken in by its tastelessness. PHILIP T. HARTUNG

CORRESPONDENCE

"Good Cause, Bad Argument"

Chestnut Hill, Mass.

TO THE EDITORS: I write in strong support of Commonweal's April 5 editorial "Good Cause, Bad Argument." Let it be said at the outset that I too favor federal aid in just proportion for all schools in our society. Aside from the claims of justice, federal aid is a practical necessity in the national public interest. An increasing number of prominent voices support this view. Witness Robert Hutchins' recent remark that he is in favor of government help to all schools that are doing the job of educating and that the wall of separation principle has no future in the U.S. *The New Republic* now advocates aid for all schools and some of the most authoritative commentators on the Constitution, writing in the law journals and in books, do not view the First Amendment as an absolute bar to federal aid. The intellectual climate is clearly changing.

What influence, if any, this will have on the Supreme Court it is impossible to say. But anyone familiar with the stream of American constitutional development knows that logic is a poor guide as a basis of prediction as to the future shaping of the law. In the final analysis, upon what side of the wall a particular program may fall will be determined only by the customary process of judicial inclusion and exclusion as the cases come before the Court for decision. Who can say that new judges performing their function under changed circumstances and with new social insights might not also give new directions to the law.

In any event I cannot subscribe to the extreme implications which are being drawn from the small body of case law we have on Church-State. Supreme Court decisions on religion and the schools currently number four (I leave aside earlier decisions which bear on the problem but which did not arise under the First Amendment). The score is two to two. Free bus rides for parochial school children and released time for religious instruction conducted off the premises but on school time do not offend the First Amendment. Released time on school property and a non-denominational prayer in the classroom are offensive. Bible reading and the Lord's Prayer are pending. On this foundation one is not warranted in concluding that virtually every governmental "aid to religion" will fall, from chaplains in Congress and the military to court oaths and "In God we Trust," although Justice Douglas' concurrence in the New York prayer case may invite litigation on these matters. Frequently overlooked is Justice Black's footnote in the same case to the effect that nothing in the decision implies that pupils are forbidden to recite historical documents or sing anthems containing references to the Deity. Worthy of mention, also, in this connection, is Justice Clark's unusual address to the American Bar Association in which he expressed shock at the public reaction to what he considered a narrow ruling.

Nor can this writer accept the thesis that the public school begins to teach the religion of secular humanism the minute it stops reading the Bible or reciting a prayer. Those who are suggesting this, I submit, are pushing the *Torcaso* decision beyond its proper boundaries. What *Torcaso* said, and all that it said, was that a declaration of belief in the existence of God cannot be made a precondition of holding public office. In the context little weight can be attached to Justice Black's footnote listing secular humanism among the varieties of religion in the country.

It is also pertinent in assessing contemporary views on religious exercises in the public schools to recall that in the nineteenth century Catholics often opposed Bible reading and other forms of religious expression on the score that they embodied Protestantism. Catholics were right in insisting that the public school be "neutral." They would be the first today and rightly so, to object to any religious exercise out of harmony with Catholic doctrine. As the Bishop of Portland, Maine, pointed out, the fact that New York's prayer was not offensive to Catholics did not change the principle; it was "civil usurpation outside its own proper sphere."

I end where I began. Federal aid to non-public schools is only one phase of the enormously complex problem of Church and State in a pluralistic society. It is probably the most sensitive. Federal aid will become part of our public policy when a majority of the American people are persuaded of the justness of the case and at the same time come to realize that the nation cannot afford not to give all of its youth the best possible education if they are to cope successfully with the demands and challenges of the Space Age.

Our best thought must be devoted to exploring ways that federal programs may be extended without violating the cherished principle of separation of Church and State. Excessive preoccupation with criticism of the Supreme Court and debatable deductions from am-

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CONTINUUM

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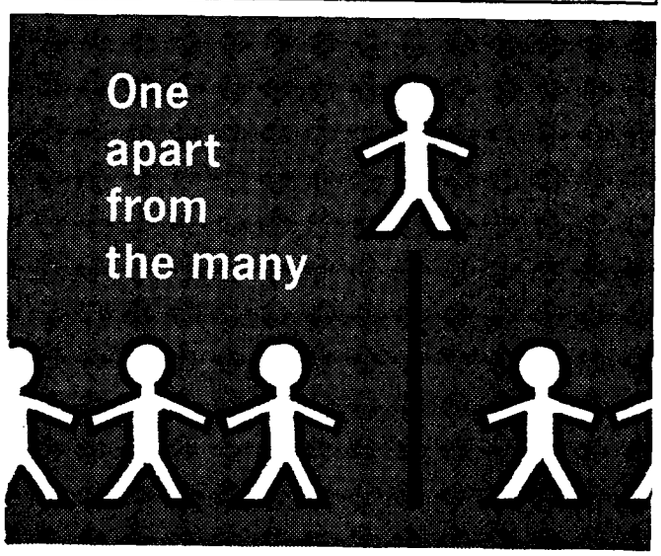

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biguous dicta will, in the long run, be of limited value in advancing what Commonweal calls the good cause.

PAUL T. HEFFRON
Chairman, Dept. of Govt.
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Rocky Mountain Literature

Fort Slocum, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: The appearance of "Denim," a poem by the late Father James F. Kittleson, in your May 17 issue, will please all who knew him not only as an apostolic priest, liturgist and artist but also as one of the very few writers of contemporary Rocky Mountain literature.

Since Father Kittleson often wrote book reviews for The Commonweal and also appeared regularly in *Worship* and other magazines, his accomplishments as a practicing theologian are not unknown. You may not know, however, that the poem "Denim" is one of a collection of Father Kittleson's poems about the Montana plains country. He had entitled it "Plains Songs" and had hoped, I think, to have it published someday as a unit. There were about twenty poems of varying lengths in "Plains Songs." As I recall them, they were all written as prose fragments, and filled with dry images of plains earth and plains people. At least half of them, I felt, deserved individual publication.

It is regrettable that the phrase "Rocky Mountain literature" immediately suggests gold seekers, hostile Indians, valiant explorers and untamed women—all residents of the nineteenth century. The literature of the region is perceived by most non-Westerners only as a romantic cliché. This unfortunate distortion of fact affected Father Kittleson very deeply. He knew that the cliché persisted because a real literature did not exist; he called the literary situation there the "Rocky Mountain Vacuum." He was aware that the phrase could be applied outside literature, but the vacuum was and is most obvious in the literary arts. The three best novels to come out of the region in the last couple of decades, *The Big Sky, The Hanging Tree* and *The Oxbow Incident*, did not directly engage the twentieth century. Poetry is everywhere in the Rocky Mountains, but little of it gets written. There are poets *in* the region; Father Kittleson was a poet *of* the region.

His "Denim" is an example of legitimate contemporary mountain literature. It is part of one man's contribution toward filling a literary vacuum. I hope, with all of Father Kittleson's Western friends, that "Denim" will not be dismissed by Eastern critics because it "confronts" nothing. "Denim" confronts. It is a re-creation of a Western reality. Western realities, I am afraid, are too easily misunderstood by those who sometimes confuse the mountain West with a novel or two read long ago.

THOMAS R. MADDEN

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Pressures for Change in Our Courts

The Trial of the Future. By Bernard Botein and Murray A. Gordon. Simon and Schuster. $3.95.

by Nat Hentoff

BERNARD Botein, Presiding Justice of the New York Supreme Court's Appellate Division, has joined Murray A. Gordon, a specialist in constitutional law, in a small book which, though calmly written, is chilling in its intimations of the future. As Botein observes, "until recently the law could afford to respond at a deliberate pace to the problems created by slowly emerging social, political, technological and industrial change. But the flow of change has quickened and deepened. We can no longer cope with it in the same leisurely fashion."

For one example, most judges are still skeptical of such recent devices as the use of drugs to insure that a witness is telling "the truth." Though such drugs are imperfect and deceptive in their present form, the question of drug-produced evidence is no longer limited to science-fiction. There is no basis, the authors warn, "for blinking the problems promised by their ultimate development." One Wisconsin court has already admitted in evidence a defendant's version of the facts taken down while he was under the influence of sodium amytal. A Federal court in 1959 allowed the introduction of a confession made by a man who was intoxicated at the time by demerol.

The effect of these scientific products on the legal process may inevitably destroy some of the present counterbalancing values of the jury system. Juries are increasingly being eliminated in civil litigation, and they could fade away in criminal cases. Traditionally, juries have shown a "capacity to legislate interstitially by subordinating a general principle of law to the equities of a particular case. There will be no room for such an escape valve if a group of scientists hands up a neatly packaged set of findings that indisputably show a violation of law. . . ."

Along with the danger of scientific specialists calcifying the operation of the courts, there are present perils. Botein and Gordon emphasize, as Edward Bennett Williams and others have argued, that "the increasing tipping of the balance between the state and the accused in favor of the state . . . is a matter of anxiety for all." Did you know, for instance, that "contrary to popular belief, police are not obligated to advise an accused under interrogation of the right to counsel?" By the time a man gets a lawyer after interrogation, he may well have hanged himself (more or less figuratively).

By the time of the trial, moreover, the state has enormously greater resources (subsidized by all of us) than even Louis Nizer. In Scandinavia, by contrast, the police department and the prosecutor's office are available to the defense—at government expense—for all necessary investigations. The prosecution there also has to produce all witnesses called for by the defense, again at government expense.

Here, the defendant and his lawyer are on their own. Lengthening the odds even further is the fact, as the authors demonstrate, that more and more of the best lawyers prefer business (particularly corporate) practice to criminal law. Present-day Darrows are inordinately scarce, and if you find one, he comes very high. Your chances in court are often in direct ratio to your income.

Aside from criminal law, the "expertizing" of justice is leading to fewer cases before a judge and jury. There are more and more hearings "by private non-judicial machinery without rules of evidence and often without benefit of lawyers. Various forms of arbitration and a proliferation of government administrative agencies are taking over more decisions. Arbitration can be much quicker and more efficient than the courts, but its growth is not without dangers to individual rights.

Similarly, Botein and Gordon warn, "if loyalty-security, deportation, denaturalization, denationalization and civil service tenure proceedings can go forward without confrontation of witnesses and without the fullest protection of each of the provisions of the Bill of Rights, how long can it be expected that the rights of the accused in a criminal trial will remain unchanged?"

Consider another and startling corollary of extrajudicial procedure. Nearly all the readers of this journal are in favor of permitting a judge to use out-of-court investigations by those trained in social work to help him decide on sentencing. But here too, although there are demonstrable advantages in acquiring this experienced advice, the out-of-court expertise "means that the critical issue of whether one convicted of crime is to go to jail and, if so, for how long," can be decided "by the use of sheer hearsay with which the defendant is not confronted and which he has no opportunity to test by cross-examination or to rebut by evidence."

Then there is the blessed (to some) specter of the computer. Here, and in Russia, programs are underway to use computers to store and retrieve legal decisions. "One wonders," say Botein and Gordon, "whether a computer will be devised to take the next step into the realm of reason and policy, which begins where authority and precedents end, and thereby replace the judge, and the lawyer too in many of his functions."

It can't happen here? "The legal profession is even now engaged in adapting rules of evidence, presently based upon the testimony of the live witness, to the testimony of the machine." It's not at all inconceivable, furthermore, that computers may eventually replace juries in determining damages in money actions.

What can we do before narcoanalysis and cybernetics make us all interchangeably honest and guilty? Since 1934, New York State has had a Law Revision Commission "to receive and consider suggestions from judges, justices, public officials, lawyers and the public generally as to defects and anachronisms in the law." During that period, more than seventy per cent of the Commission's

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recommendations for legislation have become law. Botein and Gordon argue that we now need "a unit such as the Law Revision Commission, strengthened with auxiliary personnel trained to identify, analyze and advise on converging trends, and expanded in dimension to deal with *law prevision* as well as law revision." (Italics mine.)

For one hundred and thirty years, in England, there have been *ad hoc* royal commissions, composed of distinguished specialists, in and out of the law, whose investigations of divorce, capital punishment, homosexuality, trade unions and other social and economic issues have influenced British society—and British law. The authors suggest a combination of "the continuity and permanence of the Law Revision Commission and the uninhibited range of the royal commission" as a desirable way of providing for the machinery of change in our laws and judicial procedures.

In this manner, imminent and more distant problems caused by almost out-of-control technology and social alterations may be able to be dealt with in the context of our constitutional rights before some of those rights have been vitiated in the interests of maximum "efficiency." If something of this nature is not attempted here, one of our future equivalents of Blackstone's *Commentaries* could be Kafka's *Trial*—"scientifically revised" by psychiatrists and a battery of machines to footnote all the crimes which Joseph K. actually did commit.

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Vatican and Kremlin

The Shoes of the Fisherman. By Morris L. West. Morrow. $4.95.

by John Ratté

NO POSSIBLE subject of controversy in the contemporary Church is ignored in this initially exciting, always didactic, ultimately disappointing novel. The routine of the Rota, the education of priests, the social commitment of the Church in the age of the revolution of rising expectations, the need for a new spirit and language in the theological formulations of the deposit of faith, the rigidity (and numbers) of orders and congregations, Opus Dei and conservative politics, the captive Church of eastern Europe; all these issues are aired in this story of the early pontificate of a fictional pope, Kiril I.

It is tempting to make comparisons between this work and *The Saint*, the great novel by the Italian Modernist Fogazzaro. West goes his predecessor one better by making his reformer and his Pope one and the same man. He also has the advantage over the Italian of writing a novel about a dynamic papacy during the actual existence of one. Even as the book appears, students of modern society, as well as of the papacy, will be able to turn from its predictive pages to the text of *Pacem in Terris*. But for all the changes which have occurred between the pontificates of Pius X and John XXIII, or between the imaginative papacy of Fogazzaro and the fictional Rome of West, even the reader who knows nothing about the realities of curial policies and politics cannot help but be distracted from the virtues of this book by the utter unreality of its setting.

Kiril Cardinal Lakota has been in prison in Russia for seventeen years. He is freed from his captivity by Kamenev, the dedicated Marxist who has now conveniently become Chairman of the Praesidium of the U.S.S.R., and he assumes leadership of the Ruthenian Catholics and rushes to Rome for a papal election. Deemed *papabile* by a pair of old Vatican hands who sense the Church's desperate need for a new direction, he is elected by acclamation. On the first night of his pontificate he begins a diary: out of *Extracts of the Secret Memorials of KIRIL I, Pont. Max.*, as well as from the activities of a middle-aging American newspaperman, his lightheaded Italian mistress, a German-American Catholic Jewess and assorted Curial and Quirinal types, West weaves his melodrama.

Kiril I moves quickly: he goes among his flock in plain priest's garb, argues late and eloquently with a woman on the tightrope between faith and despair, cuts down Vatican ceremony, sets up a clinic for deformed babies, and yet all the while manages to charm the Italian regulars, in spite of his Byzantine beard. (It covers a jaw-bone lost in Kamenev's camps.)

In spite of the opposition of the Cardinal Archbishop of New York, Kiril initiates a correspondence between Kamenev and the nameless president of the United States. (Even though we are told that he is "of another faith," to think of a third K to go with Kiril and Kamenev is almost irresistible.) Kamenev argues that such intimate dealings can alone save the world from a nuclear war which Red China is about to trigger. Eager to give the Church a new impetus in its mission of spreading the gospel in the post-Darwinian

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world, Pope Kiril finds a brilliant mind as well as a much-needed friend for his lonely eminence in the person of Jean Télémond, a brilliant Jesuit paleontologist who has been kept in silence and exile because of his dynamic evolutionary synthesis of matter and spirit. The novel tells of Kiril's struggles to deal with the problems of East and West, of old and new, and of his own role in the shoes of the Fisherman.

The topicality of this book should be clear from this brief synopsis. In its political plot, it falls into the *Fail Safe* category, and reflects the strong contemporary impatience with traditional modes of diplomatic and political action; it also reminds one of the old ultramontane hopes of 19th century political theorists like de Maistre and Lamennais. In the figure of Jean Télémond—who is to be the central figure in the play Mr. West is making out of his novel—the author is boldly capitalizing on the swell of interest in Teilhard de Chardin. One only hopes he will not cauterize it. In the sordid subplot he offers food for the realists who like their faith salted with sex and scandal. All in all, this book will keep Morris West in the forefront of the race for the world's second-most-famous literary chimera, (after the Great American Novel), the Great Catholic Novel. In the process, it may do some good. It will certainly entertain.

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What Is a Layman?

Toward a Theology of the Layman. By John D. Gerken, S.J. Herder and Herder. $3.95

by James F. McCue

THIS IS a very good book. If I take issue with certain of its main contentions this is because I think that it could have been and should have been better. Since the appearance of the English version of Yves Congar's *Lay People in the Church* (1957) we have had a series of works which have described the present state of the layman and have suggested ways of improving what is by general consensus something less than an ideal situation.

Unfortunately, most of these works do not succeed in getting beyond one of the most important of the views which they criticize: that the lay state is for those who are less sincere, less dedicated, less integrated, or perhaps simply less fortunate. Indeed, one might wonder whether in view of the pronouncements of Trent and of Pius XII's 1954 encyclical, *Sacra Virginitas*, it is possible to get beyond this view. The larger portion of Father Gerken's book is devoted to making an attempt.

Unfortunately, Father Gerken's analysis of the lay and religious states is needlessly rigid, and this rigidity impedes the movement of his argument. In close and avowed dependence on Karl Rahner, he distinguishes two components in the Christian attitude: love for the world and transcendence of the world. Father Gerken uses this distinction to characterize the lay and religious states: "They do not . . . represent different degrees of the same attitude toward the world; they are exclusively different attitudes toward the world."

This is surely an over-statement.

XAVIER RYNNE

writes about

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The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee 1, Wis.

Whereas Rahner argues that *every* Christian must realize this two-fold attitude, and that the components will be balanced in different ways in different individuals, Father Gerken assigns a single attitude to each state, and would have them brought together only within the Church as a community. In the course of his argument Father Gerken does in fact modify this sharp antithesis. When discussing the special importance of the religious state, he argues that the religious vows have a public, churchly importance: they manifest in an abiding way the Church's belief, "that the center of human existence has been placed outside the natural. The way of the vows shows that the Church is waiting for its full measure of perfection (and therefore salvation) from the supernatural bounty of God, Who is outside the possibilities of nature."

Here the lay and religious lives are not distinguished by a simple either-or; rather, it is the function of the religious way of life to make manifest in a special way one aspect of the common Christian life. Yet even here Father Gerken makes his position less flexible than it really needs to be: "Loosely speaking, therefore, the betterness of virginity can be said to consist in its ability to manifest the supernatural characteristics of Christian love. Lay life as such cannot manifest this characteristic." To this reviewer, at least, it seems that he could have developed his argument much more cogently, if these simple antitheses were replaced by more balanced, complex relationships.

The second main question which Father Gerken asks, is how one decides to become a layman or a religious? He attempts to show that Ignatius of Loyola's "Rules for the Discernment of Spirits" can provide a means for discovering God's will in the individual case, and argues convincingly that God's will is revealed in the particular situation, even though that situation might not be covered by a general law.

Father Gerken explains the "Rules" by means of a philosophy which, though profoundly Thomistic in inspiration, is still rather foreign to the American scene—even to the American Thomistic scene. It is therefore unfortunate that he thinks he can simply use the technical vocabulary of that philosophy without making some effort to endow it with meaning. An expression such as "thematic experience of transcendence" doubtless means something quite definite to Father Gerken but can only be opaque to most readers.

Chicago Revisited

The Silence of History. By James T. Farrell. Doubleday. $4.95.

by Richard McLaughlin

VETERAN novelists are not unlike ex-prize fighters, retired generals and old race horses: the fact that they are still churning out books, and are bent on keeping up a public image, can be saddening and embarrassing.

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As a leading practitioner of the social-protest novel, James T. Farrell's popularity dates back to a U.S.A. of the thirties, the depression years when terms like proletarian and breadline were not only of current coinage but uncomfortably real to a great many. Today, there is nothing left to protest about; and with this "anything goes" attitude, it is not at all surprising that Mr. Farrell's doctrinaire type of novel is regarded as old-fashioned.

Farrell has in *The Silence of History* returned to his old bailiwick, Chicago's South Side, the "not-quite-slum Irish neighborhood" in which he himself grew up. It is the first volume of a planned tetralogy; its writing is long-winded, opaque, even otiose at times. Perhaps the best thing that can be said for the book is that it is laboriously earnest. Readers will look in vain for those qualities that distinguished the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy and the *Danny O'Neill* series —sheer abrasive power and a white-heat veracity.

Time seems to have cooled off Farrell's temper; the pugnacity, the Dreiser-like bluntness, we admired in past performances have all but faded away. What we have now is to large extent nostalgic recall, a literally sentimental journey back to the mid-twenties when Eddie Ryan, a paler version of Farrell's earlier semi-autobiographical principal, was "contending with his destiny."

Eddie (as his creator once did) attends the University of Chicago and works in a filling station to support himself. And the more he reads about Napoleon, Talleyrand and Metternich, the more he dreams he can "break the thick silence of history." But his yearnings for immortality are often clouded by doubts. Indeed, he sees himself as "a hungry young man, carrying a battered brief case stuffed with books, looking at the world with weak and bloodshot eyes which sought the wonder of life." Unbearably shy with the opposite sex, he has easily convinced himself that "the laughing girls with soft-rosy faces did not see the hunger and wonder of those bloodshot eyes cast upon them."

Lugubrious as all this sounds—seldom a page without Eddie's thoughts being "drenched in pathos" —some of the old Farrell nevertheless emerges in the vividly graphic portraiture of minor characters. The sermonizer withdraws and the naturalistic observer takes over. Skilfully laid bare are the emotional and mental worlds of different personalities surrounding Eddie; there are poignantly alive glimpses of his grandmother, childhood playmates, school companions and teachers.

Good friend Peter Moore may not be half so obsessive in his drive for knowledge as Eddie, but he too wishes to get far and clear of his "low Irish" background. There are further complications that impede his progress. He is guilty of backsliding in his faith. Such a realization hardly eases his already troubled conscience, where his Roman Catholic family are concerned. Peter goes through countless tormenting debates with himself, much soul-wrestling, only to find that he has no definite solution to his dilemma.

"But perhaps he was not certain, convinced, ready to know what he thought. And what he thought on this morning was with the lingering effect of the Mass influencing him. His memory of those times at Mass when he was eight and he'd made his First Communion had come back to him, full and complete, and the blind or ignorant sorrow of his early boyhood was changed to memories of something he wished to have back again. Wasn't that enough truth for the Church?"

Not only is this one of the more eloquently moving passages in this dispirited work, I think it will make some of Farrell's critics rush to say "I told you so." He may not have altogether given up his private battle with the Church, but surely he seems to be more inclined here to see his mighty antagonist in a mellower light.

REVIEWERS

Nat Hentoff is a regular contributor to these pages.

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